

# Johnathan Davis is entitled to the presumption of innocence

 [canberratimes.com.au/story/8424635/presumption-of-innocence-vital-when-serious-claims-are-made](https://canberratimes.com.au/story/8424635/presumption-of-innocence-vital-when-serious-claims-are-made)

Letters to the Editor

15 November 2023

■ WATCH: Greens leader Shane Rattenbury statement on allegations made against former Greens MLA Jonathan Davis

I am dumbfounded by the extent to which ACT government ministers, particularly the Attorney-General, are prepared to comment publicly on what appear to be quite serious allegations against former MLA Johnathan Davis.

I am equally astounded by the idea somebody of no doubt senior rank thought it was appropriate to do their own in-house "kangaroo court" investigation before referring the matter to police.

Mr Rattenbury is the Attorney-General; he should have a fair idea about how the law works.

I have not read one comment from Shane Rattenbury about this man being entitled to the presumption of innocence or refusing to comment publicly because of that fundamental legal right.

Funny, isn't it, how the Attorney-General was so tight-lipped when it came to the spectacular downfall of former DPP Shane Drumgold and the endemic problems in that office. God forbid if charges are laid. What hope would Mr Davis have of a fair trial?



📷 Former Greens MLA Johnathan Davis. Picture by Elesa Kurtz

**Peter Woodhouse, Canberra**

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## **Poor choice of words**

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Could *The Canberra Times* please retire the archaic and offensive phrase "openly gay", which accompanied the recent reporting about ex-MLA Jonathan Davis? One never hears a public person described as "openly straight".

If someone's sexuality is of relevance, just describe them as gay (or whatever term they prefer). Using the prefix "openly" implies that there is something inherently brazen, sordid or shocking about a person not being in the closet about their sexuality, and has a whiff of homophobia.

It is especially galling as November is the month of Canberra's annual pride festival, SpringOUT, celebrating "Australia's most LGBTQIA+ friendly city."

**Scott Humphries, Curtin**

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## **That's not living**

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Yes, you can live a "sustained" life in a 120 square metre house but it's not the life we should have to live.

We are meant to be the "bush capital" not a cramped metropolis. These decisions are why we need a new government. The Greens and Labor are killing Canberra.

I was born here 67 years ago and now don't enjoy my place of birth.

**Michael Kennedy, Canberra**

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## **Misguided priorities**

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I was disappointed but not surprised to see the latest PR stunt by Barr and Gentleman who posed with a tiny house. Mick declared he "raised his family" in a small home.

They are both so very out of touch with reality.

I've written to Gentlemen as Policing Minister about the proliferation of inner suburban brothels in Canberra and growing crime rates which have tripled in Canberra over the past 10 years.

I have yet to receive any meaningful reply. Perhaps polities would be better off solving important problems rather than posing for propaganda photo shoots.

**Rachel Sirr, Gowrie**

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■ Find out why this small strip of land has been through so many conflicts and political upheavals since the end of World War II. Footage courtesy: CNN International

## **Zionism is not Judaism**

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It should be made clear that valid criticism of Zionist policies and practices is not anti-Semitism, as this point is specifically stated and reported by Jewish rabbis and scholars.

Anti-Zionism is not the same as anti-Semitism, although Zionist propaganda would want to claim this.

Israel is historically a result of the Zionist nationalist movement and there are prominent Jewish rabbis around the world who openly express that Zionism and Judaism are enemies of each other.

Zionists famously can be atheist (eg Ben Gurion), whereas Judaism follows the tenets of their religious beliefs such as the 10 commandments (thou should not kill etc). Anti-Zionism is valid due to the illegal occupation of Palestinian territory and the oppression of Palestinians.

Anti-Semitism is directed to all Jews and their Jewishness and is a distinctly different issue.

This issue should not be confused by critics of Israeli/Hamas conflict.

**Rozita Abdul, Woden**

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## **Stop persecuting McBride**

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What hypocrites our leaders have been in regards to David McBride.

For some time the government has been trying to get Julian Assange released back to Australia.

Julian Assange was a whistleblower, his "crime" was exposing the truth.

And now the government, more the Attorney-General, Mark Dreyfus, could step in and stop this trial against David McBride, for doing exactly the same thing - exposing the truth.

What chance does Julian Assange have given the government is taking David McBride to trial for being a whistleblower?

**Penny Costello, Giralang**

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## **Drug reform sensible**

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Rachel Sirr ([Letters, October 26](#)) said drug decriminalisation was wrong and was done without prior consultation.

The reform is intended to ensure people who use drugs are offered the health services and support they may need while providing a pathway away from the criminal justice system.

The changes have been made following extensive consultation with and input from policy experts, local and national drug and alcohol sector advocates, service providers, ACT government directorates and ACT Policing.

Drug use is not being legalised. Drug use is not safe or encouraged, and police will confiscate illicit drugs if found on a person. It will be illegal for a person to drive with any level of illegal substances in their system. Dealing will be the focus of law enforcement.

**Meg Bollen, Gungahlin**

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## Is the ABC biased?

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If Declan McGrath's assertion ([Letters, November 13](#)) that the ABC is disgracefully biased towards Hamas is true then why did ABC journalists hold a meeting over pro-Israeli bias and complain that the ABC was presenting the Israeli government's stance on the war?

Mr McGrath claimed: "Every ABC report on an Israeli air strike regurgitates Hamas spin, telling us how many children have been killed or injured, using exaggerated Hamas figures".

According to the World Health Organisation 160 children a day are dying. That's not Hamas spin. It's a fact that hospitals have been bombed. Even the Israeli military admits they're being targeted because they claim Hamas uses them as covers for tunnels.

As the cliché goes truth is the first casualty in war. Requesting a ceasefire isn't being pro-Hamas.

It's completely untrue to suggest the ABC is biased towards Hamas; the staff clearly think otherwise.

The ABC can't win. In spite of being bullied into submission by the previous government and having its funding decimated via the farcically named "efficiency dividend" it's the best news service available.

**Peter McLoughlin, Monash**

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## Tax the poor

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In Kambah good condition three-bedroom houses are consistently selling for around \$300,000 above the property block's unimproved value (UAV).

There's absolutely no way these houses could be rebuilt for anything like \$300,000.

Yet in Canberra's trendy inner suburbs buyers are regularly paying well over a million dollars above the UAV. They then knock down the house they just bought and build a new mega-mansion, often with large underground basements, gyms and wine cellars.

How can the ACT government be sure they are accurately calculating the genuine unimproved value of prime urban lots in amenity-rich locations where developers can include a huge basement and underground parking?

How do those UAV calculations compare to those in the amenity-poor outer suburbs of Tuggeranong and Belconnen where property developers or wealthy homebuilders see no value in fancy knock down rebuilds?

Does this mean owners of properties in the poorer outer suburbs are unfairly subsidising richer inner suburbs through their rates?

**B Jones, Kambah**

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## **What goes up stays up**

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The RBA's job is to reduce inflation, not prices. Once it's satisfied that inflation is under control and coming down, all that will mean is that prices have stopped increasing.

Mortgages will only come down if the RBA actually cuts interest rates. But even then don't expect the greedy banks to pass on the full cut like they do an increase and certainly not with the same rapidity.

Other price hikes imposed by supermarkets and the like are unlikely to be reversed either. They're too wedded to the super profits they've been making at our expense.

And yet when that golden age comes about and prices stop skyrocketing, we'll all breathe a sigh of relief as the RBA indulges in a self congratulatory victory lap.

The politicians will still have above inflation wage increases from their independent umpire (something ordinary workers don't benefit from) and CEOs will contemplate how to spend the huge bonuses awarded for resisting wage claims from overworked staff.

Qantas may even deign to fly all the flights it promised.

**Keith Hill, Canberra City**

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## **TO THE POINT**

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### **HOWARD LIED**

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Was John Howard "correct" when he lied that asylum seekers had thrown their children overboard from boats ([Letters, November 14](#))? Has he ever apologised for that appalling lie? Howard will be remembered as an early adopter of fake news.

**Peter Marshall, Captains Flat, NSW**

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## **PREPARE FOR PEACE**

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At times like these, I am reminded of the timeless wisdom of Aristotle: "It is not enough to win a war; it is more important to organise the peace".

**Angela Kueter-Luks, Bruce**

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## **RATES, ROADS AND CONDUCT**

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Wouldn't it be great if the Legislative Assembly paid as much attention to roads and potholes as they do to allegedly inappropriate behaviour by MLAs? I really appreciate the speed of response to the Davis issue, but hey what about the roads?

**Steve Provins, Latham**

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## **HOW HOT IS TOO HOT?**

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John Howard stated that we could live with two degrees of warming and implied it wasn't much. The world is now at least 1.1 degrees warmer than at the start of the industrial revolution and we are lurching from one climate disaster after another. It could be said that Howard is in "cloud cuckoo land". ([Letters, November 14](#)).

**Felicity Chivas, Ainslie**

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## **ORWELLIAN CONFERENCE**

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John Howard, Tony Abbott and Scott Morrison all attended a conference organised by the "Alliance for Responsible Citizenship". When I ran my irony meter over the Orwellian-sounding name of the organisation, it exploded.

**Peter Marshall, Captains Flat, NSW**

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## **PRESUMPTION OF INNOCENCE?**

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The Labor and Liberal parties called for Johnathan Davis to resign on the basis of allegations. Do they believe in innocent until proven guilty? Until the facts are known, people should hold their fire.

**Gary Fan, Reid**

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## **ELECTRIC BUSES THE GO**

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The billions being wasted on constructing tram lines would be better spent on a fleet of electric buses that can run on existing roads and provide a better service to the suburbs. The money saved could be used to build dedicated cycle tracks that

would get cyclists off roads and away from walkers.

**Brian Hanvin, Page**

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## **SOLAR FOR RENTERS?**

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Why does the ACT government provide a subsidy (the Home Energy Support Program) for those who own their homes, but not for those who rent their homes and who wish to install solar panels?

**Bob Nairn, Page**

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## **FREEDOM OF SPEECH**

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If your feelings are stretched so tightly by Pauline Hanson's opinions Kellie Nissen ([Letters, November 13](#)), tighten them another notch and be thankful she and you are free to say what you think.

**Bill Deane, Chapman**

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## **IT'S A FREE COUNTRY**

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While Kellie Nissen ([Letters, November 13](#)) expresses shame about Pauline Hanson's utterances, I am grateful that in this country we can still exchange opinions. Pauline Hanson is no fool, nor the worst senator by a long shot. At least she is passionate about Australia's future. That has to be a good sign surely.

**Anthony Bruce, Gordon**

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## **Send us a Letter to the Editor**

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